

REMARKS

Claims 12-32 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 12, 14, 16, 17, 20, 21, 25-27 and 31 are amended. In addition, Fig. 23 is amended. The claims are amended to even more clearly distinguish over the applied reference. The claim amendments are supported in the original specification at, for example, page 9, lines 3-19, page 57, line 17 - page 61, line 21 (especially see page 59, line 19 - page 60, line 2) and in Figs. 31 and 32. Thus, no new matter is added by the above amendments.

I. Information Disclosure Statement

The Examiner is requested to consider the reference (U.S. Patent No. 5,656,526) submitted with the attached Information Disclosure Statement.

II. Drawing Correction

The Examiner is thanked for identifying the informality in Fig. 23. Fig. 23 has been revised to change "16" to "116". The attached replacement sheet incorporates this revision. Entry of the replacement sheet is requested.

III. All Pending Claims are in Condition for Allowance

Claims 12-32 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) over WO 99/066370 to Nishi. This rejection is respectfully traversed. As was done in the Office Action, Applicants refer to US 2001/0041297 A1, which is in the same family as the Nishi PCT publication.

Nishi discloses an arrangement in which an illumination region is oscillated in a direction orthogonal to the scanning direction so as to form an illumination region having a trapezoidal shape. See, for example, Figs. 19A-20C1 and paragraphs [0194]-[0199] of Nishi. However, in Nishi, the overlapping region extends in a direction that is parallel to the scanning direction in which the mask and substrate are moved during exposure. See, for example, areas 253 and 254 in Figs. 19A-19E and areas 261A and 262A in Figs. 19F, 21A1, 21B1 and 21C1.

Accordingly, Nishi does not disclose or suggest an arrangement in which an overlapping region in which overlapping exposure is performed extends in a direction that differs from an arrangement direction of patterns which are arranged parallel to the scanning direction, as recited in independent claims 12, 17, 21, 25 and 31. Nishi also does not disclose or suggest an arrangement in which a locus of an end of the illumination region on the substrate is extended in a direction different from an arrangement direction of patterns which are arranged parallel to the synchronous moving direction, as recited in independent claims 14 and 16. Nishi also does not disclose or suggest an arrangement in which a size of the illumination region in a direction different from a synchronous moving direction is changed during synchronous movement, and wherein ends of the illumination region are inclined relative to an arrangement direction of patterns which are arranged parallel to the synchronous moving direction, as recited in independent claim 20.

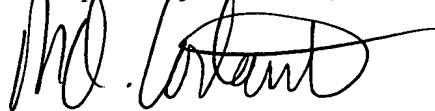
Thus, Nishi does not disclose or suggest the combinations of features recited in the independent claims of this application. Accordingly, the independent claims and their dependent claims are patentable over Nishi. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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MAC/ccs

Attachments:

Replacement Sheet (Fig. 23)
Information Disclosure Statement
Petition for Extension of Time

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